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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2015

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/70/475/Add.1)*]

70/216. Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration[1] and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,[2] adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries to eradicate poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

Reaffirming also its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming further its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong

[1] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9–13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. I.

[2] Ibid., chap. II.

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political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling its resolution 69/231 of 19 December 2014 on the follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

Recalling also its resolution 67/221 of 21 December 2012 on the smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/35 of 23 July 2015 on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020[3] and on the implementation, effectiveness and added value of smooth transition measures;[4]

2. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other actors to further intensify their efforts to fully and effectively implement, in a coordinated, coherent and expeditious manner, the commitments made in the Istanbul Programme of Action[2] in its eight priority areas, namely: (*a*) productive capacity; (*b*) agriculture, food security and rural development; (*c*) trade; (*d*) commodities; (*e*) human and social development; (*f*) multiple crises and other emerging challenges; (*g*) mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building; and (*h*) good governance at all levels;

3. *Underscores* that the ownership, leadership and primary responsibility for development in the least developed countries rest with themselves, and also underscores that good governance, inclusiveness and transparency, as well as domestic resource mobilization, are central to the development process of the least developed countries and that these efforts need to be given concrete and substantial international support, in a spirit of shared responsibility and mutual accountability, through renewed and strengthened global partnership, and calls upon the international community to assist the least developed countries in building their capacities and to strengthen the global partnership for development, including through strengthened support from all sources in all priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action in order to ensure its timely, effective and full implementation during the remainder of the decade;

4. *Notes with appreciation* that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[5] and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development[6] incorporate a number of key development challenges and priorities for the least developed countries;

5. *Underlines* that the special needs and development priorities of the least developed countries, as contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action, such as productive capacity-building, including through the rapid and timely development

[3] A/70/83-E/2015/75.

[4] A/70/292.

[5] Resolution 70/1.

[6] Resolution 69/313, annex.

of infrastructure and energy, should be given appropriate consideration in relation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

6. *Also underlines* the need for strong synergy, coherence and efficiency regarding the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

7. *Reaffirms* that the least developed countries, as the most vulnerable group of countries, need enhanced global support to overcome the structural challenges they face in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in this regard calls upon the international community to prioritize and strengthen support from all sources to facilitate the coordinated implementation and coherent follow-up to and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in the least developed countries;

8. *Recalls* its decision, in its resolution 69/231, on the modalities of the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, and decides that the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review will be held in Antalya, Turkey, from 27 to 29 May 2016;

9. *Welcomes* the appointment of the Permanent Representatives of Belgium and Benin as the co-facilitators to oversee and direct informal intergovernmental consultations on all issues relating to the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review;

10. *Decides* that the preparatory meeting of experts, to be chaired by the co-facilitators, will be held from 28 to 31 March 2016, in accordance with its resolution 69/231, and that it will consider the draft outcome document;

11. *Reaffirms* the scope of the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review, as contained in paragraph 28 of its resolution 69/231;

12. *Encourages* participants to consider the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review as an opportunity to highlight how the concrete measures, initiatives, partnerships and actions that they have taken to date have supported the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and to launch other concrete measures, initiatives and partnerships, individually or collectively, that have the potential to further progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action, building on the momentum of recent and relevant United Nations meetings, agendas and conferences, and the decisions contained therein;

13. *Reaffirms* the critical importance of the full and effective participation of the least developed countries in the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review at the national, regional and global levels, stresses that adequate resources should be provided, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to mobilize extrabudgetary resources in order to cover the cost of the participation of at least three government representatives of each least developed country in the Midterm Review and at least two representatives of each least developed country in the preparatory meeting of experts;

14. *Notes* the ongoing national- and regional-level preparations that will make important contributions to the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review;

15. *Reiterates its call upon* all Member States, and invites the organizations of the United Nations system and other international and regional financial institutions, to actively participate in the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review, at the highest possible level, and in its preparatory processes;

16. *Underlines* the need to reduce the vulnerability of the least developed countries to economic, natural and environmental shocks and disasters, as well as climate change, and to enhance their ability to meet these and other challenges by strengthening their resilience, and in this regard stresses that it is important that all countries and other actors work together to further develop and implement concrete measures on an urgent basis at the national and international levels so as to build the resilience of the least developed countries to withstand economic shocks and mitigate their adverse effects, to withstand and overcome the adverse effects of climate change, to enhance sustainable growth and protect biodiversity and to withstand natural hazards in order to reduce the risk of disasters, as agreed upon in the Istanbul Programme of Action;

17. *Takes note* of the feasibility study for a United Nations technology bank for the least developed countries prepared by the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries[7] and the report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility study for a United Nations technology bank for the least developed countries,[8] and appreciates the work done by the High-level Panel;

18. *Welcomes with appreciation*, and accepts, the offer by Turkey to host the technology bank and science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to the least developed countries under the auspices of the United Nations in Gebze, and requests the Secretary-General to conclude a host country agreement with the Government of Turkey in that regard;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, in particular the least developed countries, development partners and the host country, and drawing on the appropriate expertise inside and outside the United Nations system, to take the steps necessary to launch and operationalize the technology bank for the least developed countries, funded by voluntary contributions, by 2017, and to mobilize and ensure the continued support for the technology bank from all relevant stakeholders, including through:

(*a*) Establishing a multi-stakeholder governing council comprising the representatives of the Governments and the non-governmental sectors of the least developed countries, the host country, other Member States and the Secretary-General, which, among other things, will formulate principles and policies governing the activities and operations of the technology bank, in line with the recommendations of the High-level Panel, as guiding principles and inform the General Assembly regularly on the work of the technology bank;

(*b*) Establishing a trust fund with the flexibility necessary to attract voluntary funding from Member States and other stakeholders, including the private sector and foundations;

(*c*) Mobilizing the organizations of the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations to support the launch and operationalization of the technology bank and its effective functioning;

[7] See http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2015/10/Feasibility-Study-of-Technology-Bank.pdf.
[8] A/70/408.

20. *Recalls* the importance of avoiding duplication and enhancing synergies between the technology bank for the least developed countries and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism;[9]

21. *Reiterates its recommendation* that the consultative mechanism specified in its resolution 59/209 of 20 December 2004 be established by the graduating country, in cooperation with its bilateral and multilateral development and trading partners, to facilitate the preparation of the transition strategy and the identification of the associated actions and the negotiation of their duration and phasing-out for a period appropriate to the development situation of the country, and that it be integrated into other relevant consultative processes and initiatives between the graduating country and its development partners;

22. *Invites* development partners to make available timely information about country-specific support measures and related smooth transition measures for the least developed countries in the areas of financial support, technical assistance and trade-related measures, including their time frames, characteristics and modalities;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session a progress report on the implementation, effectiveness and added value of smooth transition measures, including initiatives taken by the United Nations system to support countries during their graduation from the least developed country category;

24. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report, by the first quarter of 2016, on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, in lieu of his report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session and to the Economic and Social Council at its 2016 session , and decides to include, under the item entitled "Groups of countries in special situations", the sub-item entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-first session, unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee;

25. *Decides* to consider the report of the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review at its seventy-first session, under the sub-item entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" of the item entitled "Groups of countries in special situations".

81st plenary meeting
22 December 2015

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[9] Resolution 69/313, para. 123, and resolution 70/1, para. 70.